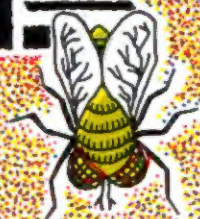


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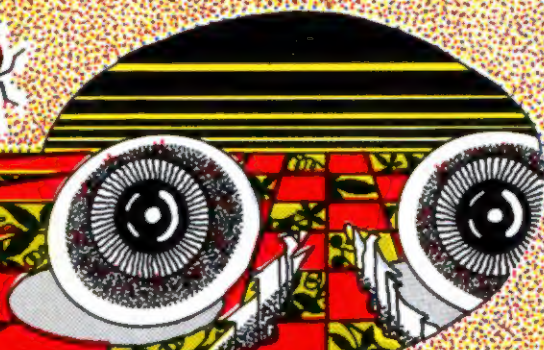
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★
Thru
Black
Holes
Comix
★ ★ ★



QUEEN OF HAIRY FLIES



With:

Spain
R. Hayes
S.C. Wilson

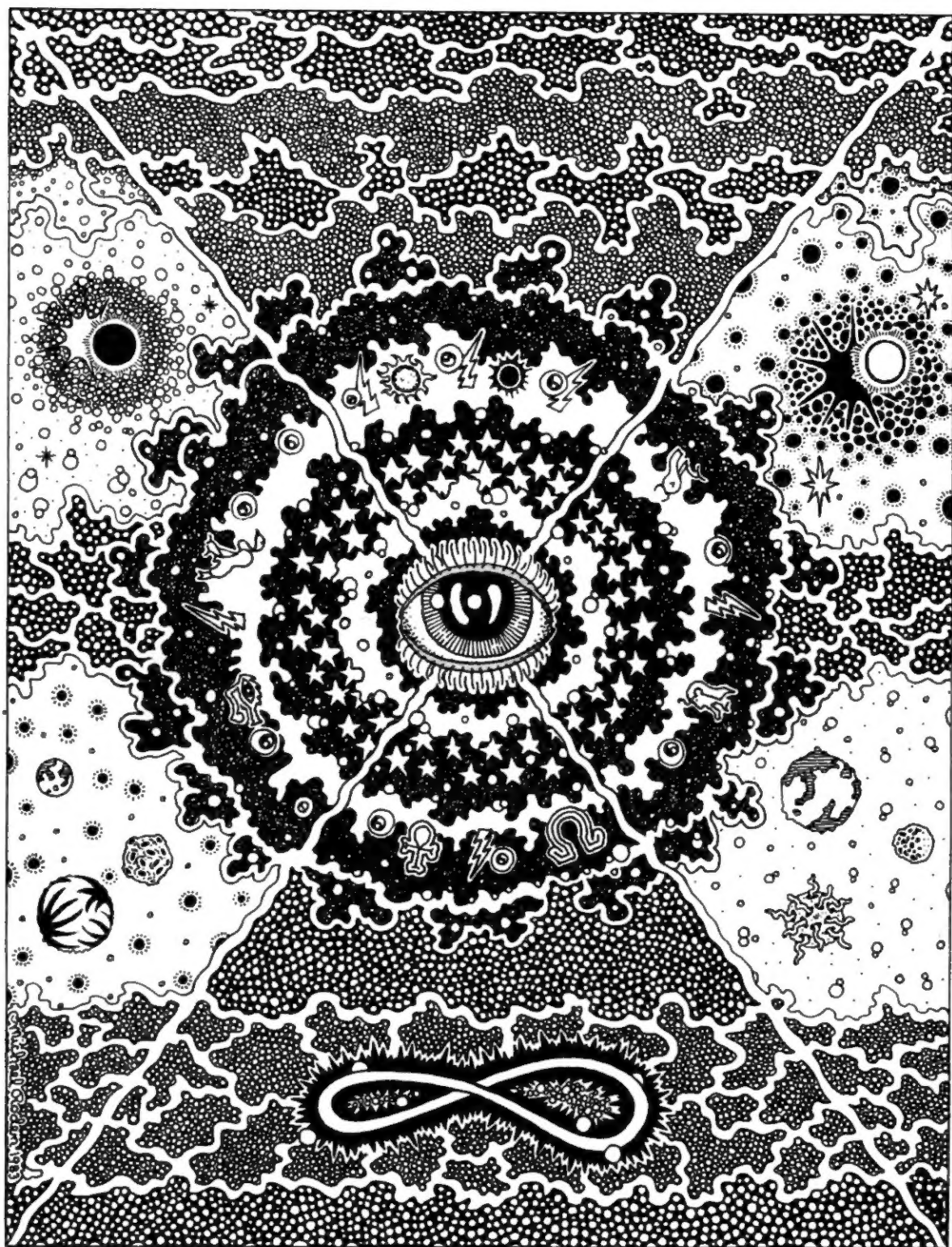


© 1984 Michael Sedon

THE CHECKERED DEMON
PET MUTANT INSECT SUCKS
THE DREGS FROM THE HEART
OF A DISINTERRED CORPSE.

© CLAY WILSON
JULY 1981





"Queen of Hairy Flies" is loosely based upon "The Black Pullet", an Occult Science works belonging to the end of the late 18TH Century. Produced by Michael Roden. Covers printed by Tom Brinkmann.
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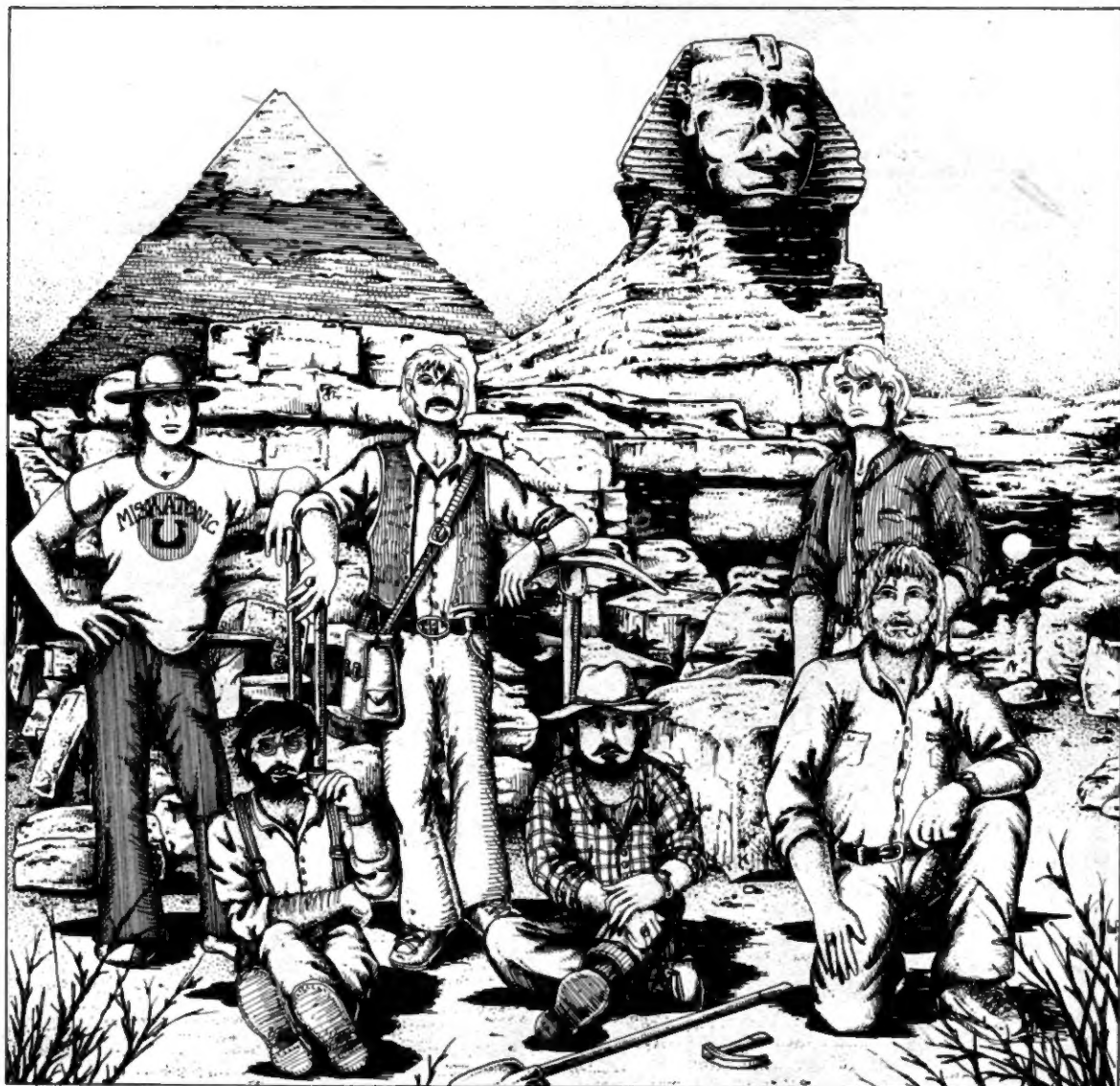
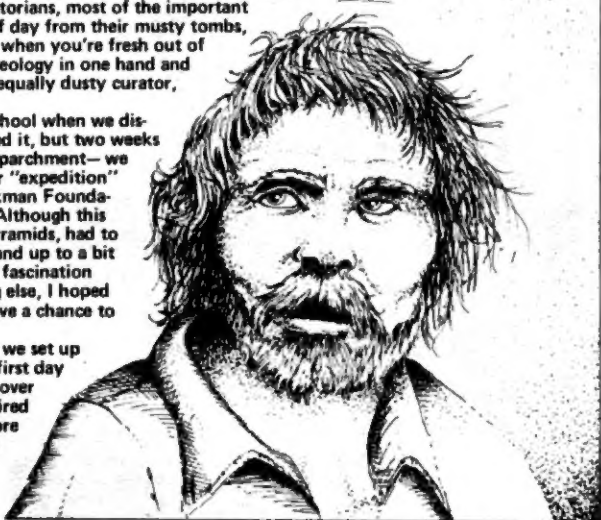


That was the six of us back in the summer of '68—that's me in the lower right, Robert Danton—fresh out of college and ready to be real archeologists! We all realized that the chances of making any major new finds among the tombs of Egypt were almost nil. Between centuries of illegal grave-robbing by thousands of thieves, and decades of the more legal type of grave robbing by historians, most of the important finds had been made. Having being carried up briefly into the light of day from their musty tombs, they now resided in the modern equivalent, the musty museum. But when you're fresh out of college—the Miskatonic University to be exact—with a degree in archeology in one hand and no great wish to join those dusty relics in their dusty museums as an equally dusty curator, even the faintest of hopes will carry you a long way.

As six people of widely diverse tastes, we'd all gotten together at school when we discovered a common interest in Egypt. I don't recall who first suggested it, but two weeks after getting handed that fancy sheet of scroll work—paper, alas, not parchment—we had conned a small New England museum into partially financing our "expedition" to Egypt, the rest coming from the University's Nathaniel Derby Pickman Foundation. As the unofficial leader of the team I headed us toward Giza. Although this one area, filled with its fabulous tombs, temples and awe-inspiring pyramids, had to be the most well-explored area along the Nile, we felt it could still stand up to a bit more sand-shoveling. And a personal fascination with the Sphinx—a fascination that I now know I shared with the others—drew me there. If nothing else, I hoped that by sleeping at the feet of that strangest of all monuments, I'd have a chance to erect my own dream stele next to old Tuthmosis IV's.

Having overcome the difficulties of permits with the local officials, we set up camp at the base of the Sphinx. The tremendous excitement of our first day in Egypt, and the strenuous physical activity involved in climbing all over the pyramids had us exhausted by the time evening rolled around. Tired but happy, I recall winking at the silent Sphinx towering over us before rolling over, pulling the sleeping bag tightly around me in the rapidly cooling desert air, and falling to sleep.

As things turned out, those dreams I had hoped for turned into a series of all too real nightmares.





A scream!

I seemed to feel more than hear a blood-curdling scream in my sleep, and shot instantly awake—into mass confusion. In the dead of night only the glow of the stars lit our camp, with the absence of those stars showing the movements of shadowy forms around me. Before I could react, the sound of someone moving up behind me made me twist about, and I found myself gazing up into a pair of bright, glaring eyes that would have done Abdul Alhazred proud. That and the dull flash of light off a long blade were enough to send me scrambling backwards in fear for my life. I still didn't know what was going on, but there was no mistaking the death I saw in those eyes. The man was dressed entirely in black with only his eyes exposed, and he muttered in guttural Arabic as he advanced on me, holding the long knife up to strike. Getting tangled up in my sleeping bag, I fell backward as he slashed out, and I could feel the breeze on my face as the sharp edge passed within an inch of my nose. I could hear more sounds now, screams of pain that had to be coming from my friends as they too awakened to the same nightmare as I had. Turning away to try and free myself from the cloth tangled about my feet I was surprised to see, for an instant, what looked like a small glowing form moving about among our attackers. It reached out to one and the man dropped instantly to his knees, his sudden shriek of pain lasting only a second. But I had no time to see more, as my own assailant stepped in behind me, now shouting loudly as he slashed out a second time, and everything went black.

When I came to it was with a burst of searing pain exploding in my brain. I squirmed about on the ground for a few seconds until the pain started to localize, becoming a steady, hard-beating headache and a distinctive sharp pulsing in the back of my skull. Reaching up as I lie on the ground, I gingerly touched the sore spot, only to have my efforts rewarded with an even more painful burst of agony. I snatched my hand away and, when my vision came back into focus and I could unclench my teeth, I looked down to see my palm and fingers gleaming wet in the dim light. I could feel my consciousness starting to fade out again, but was still aware enough to realize that I was probably slipping into shock, and that I was going to die on that desert. While still half-crouched, half lying in the sand, trying to decide if I was already dead or alive, or even which condition I might prefer at that moment, I heard a sound that made me freeze in new fear.

A harsh, grinding rasp came from behind me, like two ponderous stones being scraped slowly against each other. Seconds later I became aware of a strange odor coming up from behind me as well, a smell I'd run across before in ruins, and one I'd come to associate with death. But before I could react to this new development, I felt the light touch of something on my shoulder. This sudden surprise to my already overloaded nervous system made me jerk forward involuntarily, twisting my head about to see who or what it was, and this time the renewal of pain from my wound this action set off was so great that I again blacked out.

The very next thing I remember being aware of was that the strange odor of death was now stronger than ever. It was a sickly sweet smell, as though of decaying flesh still clinging to bone, not having yet completely gone on to the final sterility of cleansed ivory. And over it was the cloying sweetness of an incense I couldn't identify, but which added rather than subtracted from the oppressive atmosphere. I could only feel a slight throbbing now in my temples, but recalling my previous two experiences upon awakening, I wasn't at all confident that another slight movement wouldn't bring back the crushing pain. I kept my eyes tightly closed and worked with my other senses. I was lying flat on my back, and the surface beneath me was cold and hard, not the cool slickness of the sleeping bag I'd started the night in, or the gritty warmth of desert sand where I'd fallen last. Slowly moving one hand, I slid it alongside my body, feeling the surface under me with my fingertips. I could feel the tight joints of small square tiles.

"I am pleased to see you are again conscious, Robert Danton."



My eyes flew open at the sound of that voice, and for a moment I was struggling to orient myself. The last I had known I was out under a night sky in desert air. I now found myself staring up at a sooty stone roof close overhead, the light showing faint marks from ancient carvings. Looking about I saw more strange carvings on the four walls close around me, then stopped in amazement when I saw the old man standing by my feet. Looking down at me in silence, his lined face made his age and race indistinguishable, but although he had spoken in English, it had been with a heavy Egyptian accent. I couldn't figure out why he looked so strange to me. He seemed, for want of a better word, slightly distorted, as though his head and body were out of sync with the rest of the room. He made no move, but continued to watch me out of bright, burning eyes that for a moment reminded me of those that had started this nightmare. I raised myself upon one hand and felt the back of my neck, bringing my palm back this time with no blood, but a fine powdery residue. "Your wound was most distressing, Robert Danton, and unfortunate. But I have healed it," he said quietly.

"Where am I?" I asked, squinting in the light to make him out better. "How do you know my name?" He smiled and spread his hands. "You are honored as the first mortal in centuries to see the wonders beneath the Sphinx, the temple of the Queen of Hairy Flies." I told him I knew the Sphinx had been carved from a solid rock outcropping, and that it didn't have any chambers within it. He simply smiled all the wider. "Egypt still holds many secrets from outsiders, but you are about to be one of the privileged few to be made a part of its oldest and darkest secret. The first, but soon the entire world will know the ancient truth of our cult!" With a swirl of his robes the little man turned and stalked off down a darkened passageway at one end of the chamber. As I rose to a sitting position, only a slight throbbing in my forehead remained to remind me of the blow I'd received. The room was quickly growing dark, and I saw that, although he carried no torch, the light seemed to be leaving with the old man. That made me realize that I had seen him outside—not as my attacker, but the strangely glowing form I had glimpsed. Although still weak from loss of blood, I hurried to catch up with him, having to duck my head in the narrow, downward sloping corridor. "Wait! Please, you must tell me, what's going on? Why am I here?"

"All will be explained," he said as I caught up with him. "Simply follow me, Robert Danton." Confused and disoriented from the wild events so far of the evening, and not even sure I wasn't in some shock-induced dream, I quietly fell into step with him as he talked.

"You are not within the Sphinx itself, but beneath it. That old fool Khepren choose to have his slaves carve that stone into his likeness more than 4000 years ago, but these chambers have been here since the year 3700 BC by your calendar, over 1,500 years before Khepren's monument to himself!" After long hours of studying Egyptian art and history in school, it took only a quick glance at the carvings we passed to realize that, although they appeared to have the basic forms I knew, there was a strangeness to everything that defied my efforts to date them. The hieroglyphs engraved on the walls were from no dynasty that I knew of, although bits and pieces seemed to foreshadow forms I was familiar with. Despite the fine preservation of the stone when compared to the crumbling ruins on the surface, things were incredibly older here, supporting what I had at first passed off as an old man's lunatic ravings. "These chambers were carved to house the followers of the one true diety, the glorious Queen of Hairy Flies. But we were never accepted by our fellow Egyptians, and it wasn't long before we were outlawed, with all records of our existence destroyed."





"The cult was forced to go underground, both figuratively and literally, and for 50 centuries we have struggled against the unbelievers. From Egypt priests such as I took the message of the one true god into secret enclaves in Europe, Asia and the Americas. But the persecution of our beliefs went on and on until, just a century ago, this temple was once again the only place where men could worship our Queen." The passage had been growing larger as we walked, and as I became more used to the heavy sweetness in the air, I could discern different, even more noxious odors drifting in from dark side corridors. Faint sounds came from many of these, far off clicks and squeals more unnerving than any loud noise would have been in that silence. The old man was close to ranting as he continued. "But now we shall see a rebirth of belief, a revitalization of our cult, and you will be the instrument of that rebirth. Have you not felt the pull of these lands all your life, so far from your birthplace? And even more that of the Sphinx above? I have known since the instant of your conception that you would come. The blood of the priest sect is in your veins—diluted through the centuries, but still stronger than any living being other than I. I have existed here alone for almost 200 years, to



serve my Queen and wait for your coming. When you finally arrived, I could hardly wait to bring you here, but had to wait for cover of darkness to separate you from your companions. The attack on you was unplanned, but solved the problem of what to do with your partners." By this time I was so numb from what I'd seen I didn't even react to the implications of his statement. We were moving into a vast chamber, the ceiling soaring so high above us it was lost in darkness. Strange, flitting shadows and liquid gurgling sounds from those shadowy heights made me shudder, glad my eyes couldn't pierce the darkness. The beautiful symmetry of Egyptian temple construction was missing here. Walls came together at strange angles and planes high overhead. Nothing that could be measured exactly, but when I tried to run my eyes along an edge or juncture too long, a strange queasiness started building in the pit of my stomach and my eyes began to lose their focus. Passing through this great chamber seemed to take hours as we walked under the sightless gaze of huge statues towering 40 feet or more overhead. They were a strange, almost malignant mixture of men and animals, or men and things indescribable. Unlike the canon of Egyptian gods with animal heads and human bodies that I was familiar with, these figures managed to convey more a sense of the subhuman than the extra-human.

We finally came to a small doorway between two of the more obscene statues, and moved down another long corridor, the old priest silent for the first time. This one ended in a small circular chamber similar to the one I had awoken in, but dominated by a statue supporting a small platform, on which rested a large black book. The old priest stepped up to it, touched the four corners of the cover in what looked like some kind of ritual, and then spoke with his back to me, lightly stroking the cover with his fingertips. His voice was barely a whisper, and I had to move in closer to hear his words.

"This is the Black Pullet, the book of all knowledge, upon which all that we are or shall be is based. The stories and spells contained herein are the way of power or our cult. The original papyrus scrolls of the Pullet, objects of incredible age long before even this chamber was constructed, had been in an Asian outpost of the cult less than two centuries ago, but they were destroyed when the infidel unbelievers razed that temple." He picked up the book and clutched it to his chest, his eyes wide and staring off into space, his voice growing louder with passion. "This is now the only surviving complete record

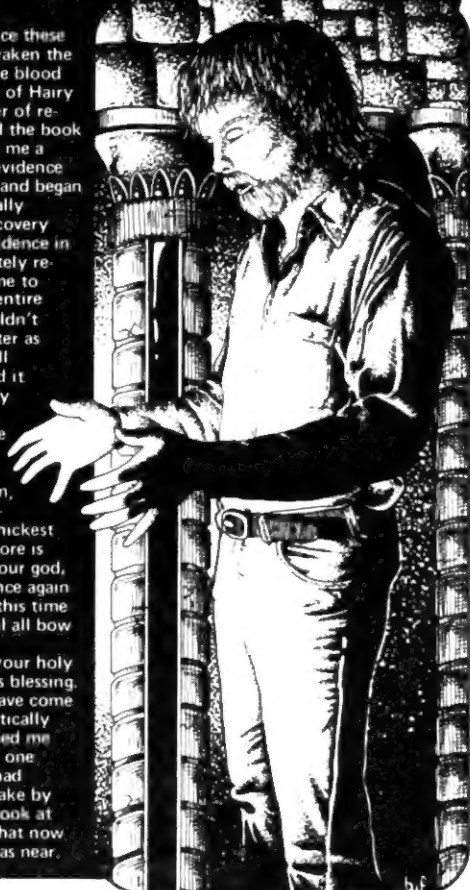


in any form of the glorious cult of our Queen. It was put together in the 17th century by a group of scribes in northern Italy, and after the loss of the original scrolls, was returned to this temple for safe keeping." He turned now to face me, although he continued staring at the Pullet. "To me the ultimate horror of that loss was that, while I could have read the scrolls, this book is a mixture of a hundred different symbols, put down by a dozen different men working over several years. The men who worked on it used the original hieroglyphs from the scrolls, but also translated some sections into more recent Egyptian forms, while others contain bastardized versions of Greek and Roman. Still others appear to be occult runes from the middle ages, and much of it I have no knowledge at all as to its origin. Take this sacred tome, Robert Danton. It is up to you to once again unlock the secrets contained in here, and

tell the world of what you learn. Once these tales are made known, they will reawaken the racial memories in those with the true blood in their veins. The cult of the Queen of Hairy Flies will be reborn!" I felt a shudder of revulsion pass up my spine as he passed the book to me, and it felt as if he had handed me a block of ice. But as if to refute the evidence of my senses, my hands felt clammy and began to tingle as though my skin was literally crawling. Here was the awesome discovery I'd hoped to make in Egypt, solid evidence in my hands, and I found I was completely repulsed by it. My mind screamed at me to throw it away, to run and leave this entire nightmare behind, but my body wouldn't obey. I simply clasped it all the tighter as the priest went on, his own hands still grasping the book as though he found it hard to finally turn it over completely to another.

"It is not necessary that any believe at first what they may hear or read from the Black Pullet as you reveal it. Simply present these tales to them, and the long dormant feelings will return. Those in who the blood runs thickest will respond first, but as more and more is revealed, the truth of our god, Queen and cult will once again fill all the world, and this time to grow and grow until all bow before her!"

"But come, before you begin your holy mission you must receive the Queen's blessing. It has been so long since any save I have come before her!" The old priest was practically babbling and giggling now as he hurried me along yet another dank corridor, this one opposite the one through which we had entered. I felt I had had all I could take by then, but tried to prepare myself to look at one more monstrous statue, feeling that now he had given me the book, the end was near.



When we came to the end of this passage, I had only a second to see that this new room was almost a perfect square in shape, the ceiling again high above me at around 50 feet, and all the walls totally bare of ornamentation, painted a flat black. I took all this in with one quick glance, as my eyes were locked on the giant statue that sat across the chamber from me, one for which those I'd seen earlier were poor preparation. This was not just a grafting together of human and animal parts, but a true merging into a thing totally alien. Someone had spent much time in its design and carving, for even seated it towered over us, the head at the ceiling. What was most disturbing was the lack of angularity and hard edges as in the other statues, the frightening realism of the forms. The old priest practically cowered into the room, singing out what I took to be some kind of song of praise in his native tongue, his skinny arms raised high over his head. And while he rushed in, I found for the first time since I'd been there I was totally awake, aware—and incredibly frightened. A wave of nausea swept over me as I looked up into that horrible face. I could feel the

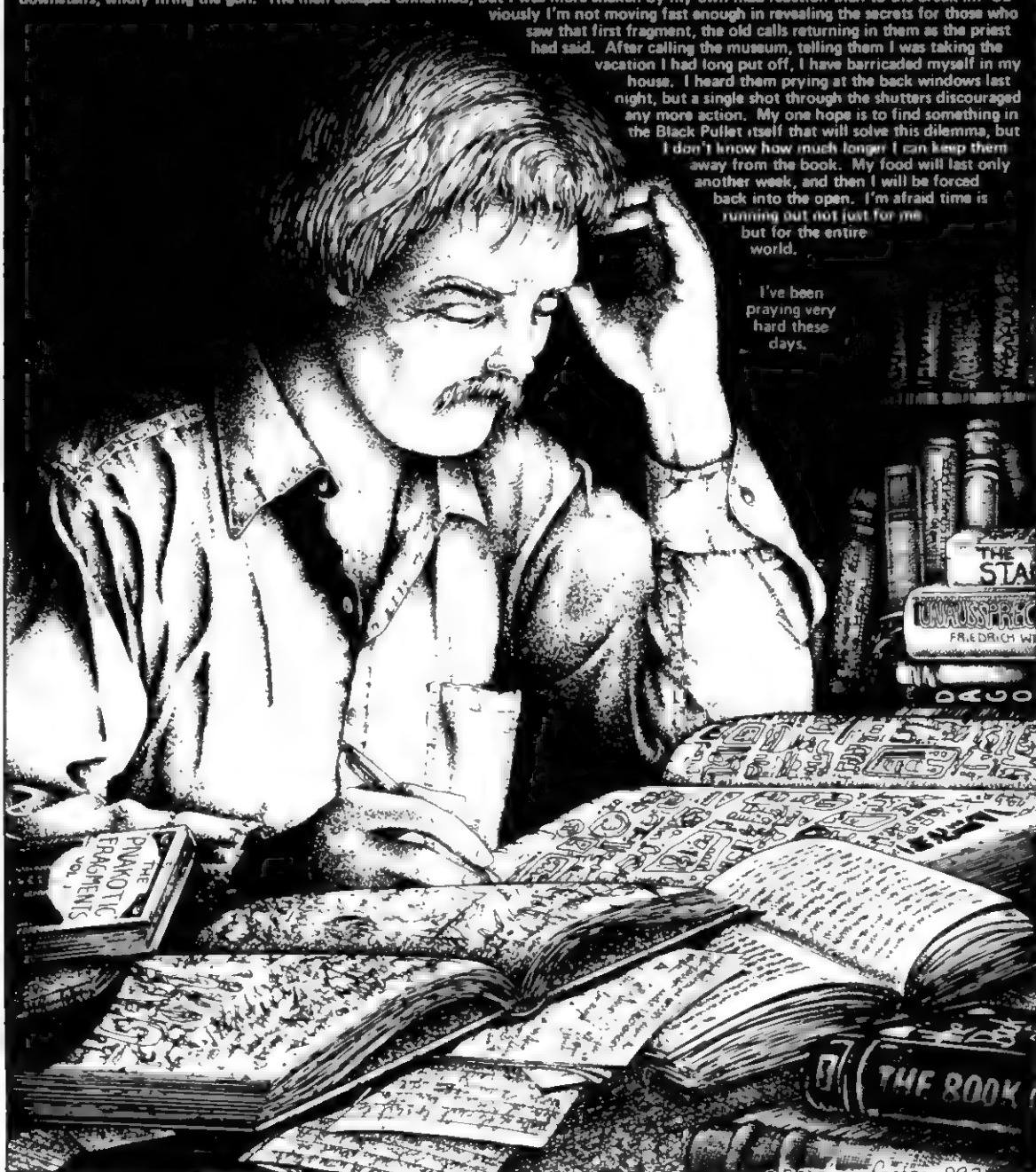
throbbing in my head starting to build even as the priest's wails got shriller and shriller. But as I started to turn away I was frozen in my place, paralyzed by bone-chilling, brain-numbing horror. For what I had taken to be a blasphemous statue opened its eyes and looked at me! There was nothing in the red orbs of that obscene creature but an all-consuming malevolence. And when they turned on me I felt my heart grow cold, for I knew in that instant the terrible truth. When living gods lose their worshippers, they do not die—they go mad! The old priest was now prostrated on the floor, screaming out prayers at the top of his lungs, while I stood pinned to the spot like a bird before a viper. The creature's mouth slowly dropped open and it began to scream, spittle flying through the air in great gobs while those eyes never left mine. The awful explosion of maniac noise pierced my brain like a physical blade and I tumbled to my knees. This final insanity of horrors proved too much, as the almost physical assault on my mind pushed me for the third and final time over into the blessed oblivion of darkness...

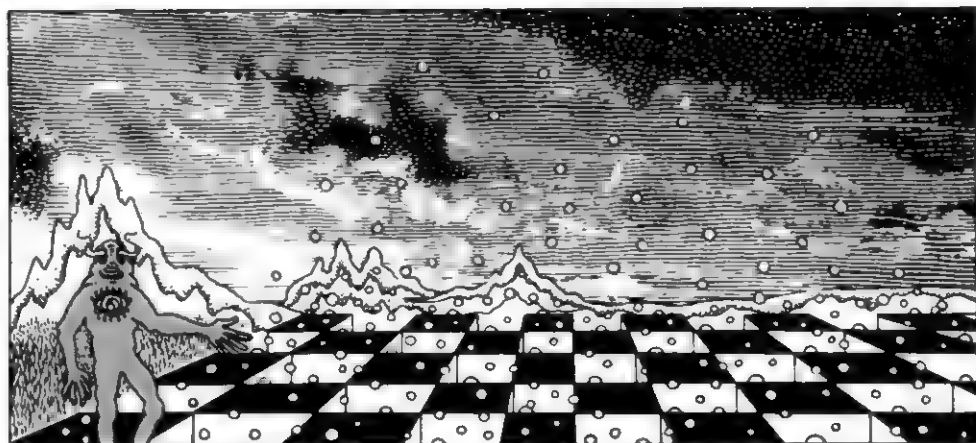


That was over a dozen years ago. I was held in Egypt while the authorities investigated the deaths of both my friends and our attackers, finally concluding I had been wounded early on in the attack, and thus escaped death in the fight they felt had followed. I made no argument with their findings, simply wanting to put as much space as possible between myself and that gibbering horror under the sands. On returning to the states I quickly locked myself into the quiet world of the curator I'd been so loathe to live only a week before. Although I showed the book to the museum directors, with a mumbled explanation of having bought it from a young boy on arrival in Egypt, I quickly locked it away in my attic, praying the routine of the job would cleanse me of memories of that night. But after a year of trying to forget, I was drawn against my will back to its yellowed pages. I began devoting my evenings to working on its translation, then started taking it to work to continue my efforts on my breaks. The rare book collection at Miskatonic, with its wide array of strange, arcane titles, helped me in getting started on the Pullet. And when the museum directors found out I could relate the contents of my book to some of those rare and valuable tomes, I was allowed to devote myself full time to its translation. Although they knew nothing of its contents, I imagine they hoped it might reveal something new and bring a little fame to the museum. It was slow going at first. I managed to translate only 50 of the more than 1,000 pages the first two years. Those were of more general historical knowledge, and thus easily checked against other records. But as I got further and further into the tales, I was both repulsed and intrigued by what I read. It was only within the last year that I began making headway with the more arcane passages, and it was also during that time that, under pressure from the museum to show some results for the years they had supported me, I published a short excerpt of one of the less blasphemous sections in a small scholarly journal. Soon after that I began to find things in my office and home disturbed, as though they had been searched through. I began feeling as though I was being followed all the time. After finding the lock on my office safe broken last month, I tried to burn that hellish book and all my notes, rather than chance anyone else getting hold of it. But try as I might I couldn't light the match. I had to admit then that my life was inexorably linked with both the book and the cult. The blood of the priests prevents me from destroying it, but my own will seems to make me immune to the siren call bringing these others after me. I bought a gun and took to keeping the Pullet by me at all times. Last week I awoke to the sound of furtive movement in my house. Screaming that the book belonged to me, I charged downstairs, wildly firing the gun. The man escaped unharmed, but I was more shaken by my own mad reaction than to the break in. Obviously I'm not moving fast enough in revealing the secrets for those who

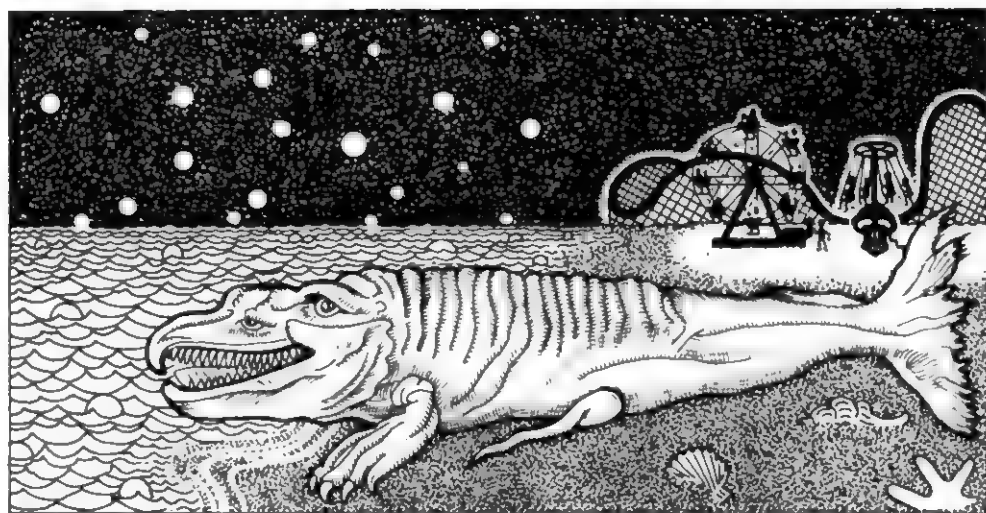
saw that first fragment, the old calls returning in them as the priest had said. After calling the museum, telling them I was taking the vacation I had long put off, I have barricaded myself in my house. I heard them prying at the back windows last night, but a single shot through the shutters discouraged any more action. My one hope is to find something in the Black Pullet itself that will solve this dilemma, but I don't know how much longer I can keep them away from the book. My food will last only another week, and then I will be forced back into the open. I'm afraid time is running out not just for me but for the entire world.

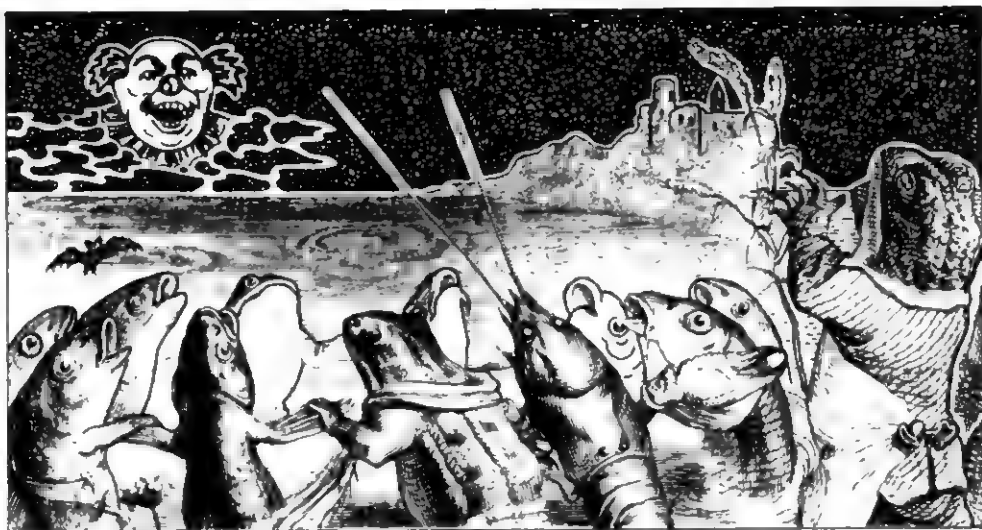
I've been
praying very
hard these
days.









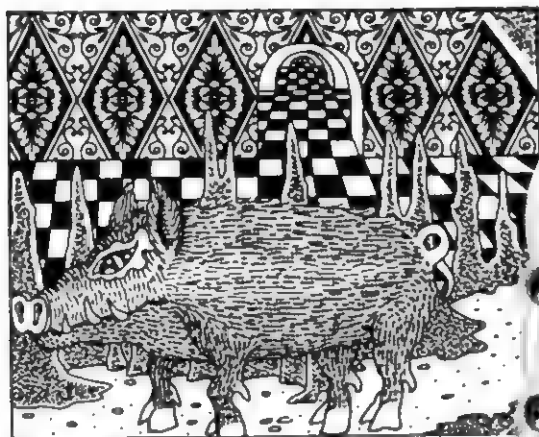


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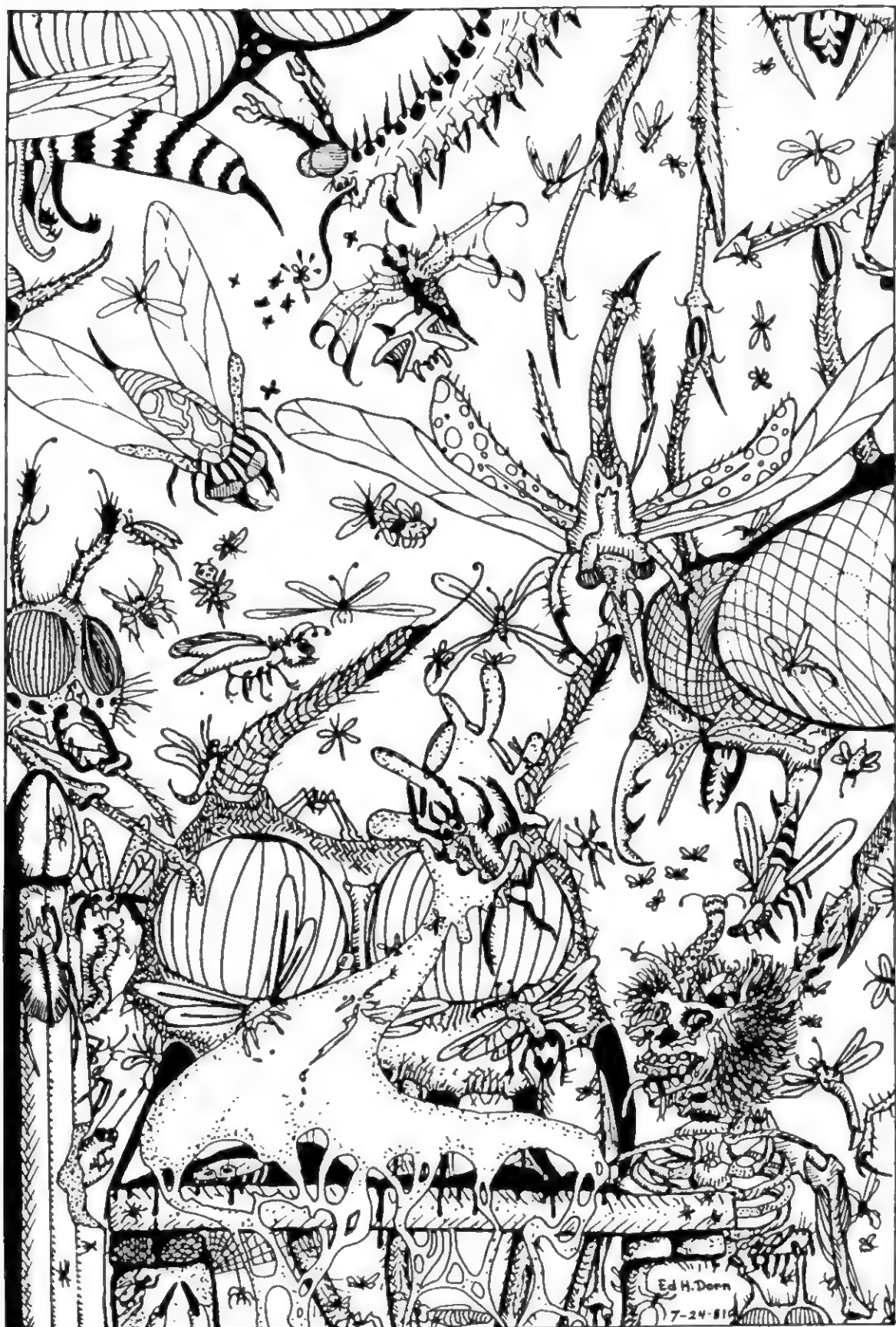


There was nothing that
the Monks could do
for Sven in the end...



So The Angels of Death came for him. • X

THE
END



the

SKULL

of

Memorization



Our tale begins after the massacre of a band of Roman scouts in a thick and mouldy wood by a horde of Celts. They were given no quarter. One remained barely alive, and was left for dead. A druid priest appeared and discovered the soldier. He transported him to his dwelling in the darkest, most mysterious part of the oaken forest.



no quarter

The druid prepared for the stay of the new found neophyte while his servants nursed the Roman back to health with elixers made from selago and mistletoe, among other sacred herbs. Not dreaming of the knowledge and wisdom that was to be his, he made fast recovery.

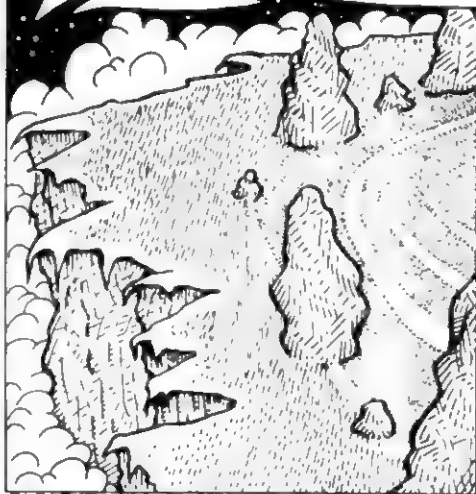


the rover

After several nights of fevered dreams the young soldier awakened to find himself the guest of the druid. He was surrounded by strange and wonderful sights and smells. As the druid explained his whereabouts and destiny, he noticed servants coming and going preparing for his apprenticeship. He also noticed his face had been adorned with symbols of a mystical nature.



Within the passing of sixty nights he was taught the laws of fire, wind, earth and sea. The secrets of the Ancients, Magickal thought, the mysteries of the oak, all was made known. The druid produced a pouch from which he took twenty-two inscribed talismans.



The druid instructed him in the use of each talisman and performed many wonders before him, each one having different purpose. He learned quickly with the talent the sage knew he possessed.

At the end of the teachings the druid grew weak and knew it was nearing his time to pass on to new celestial worlds. He conjured a spirit with one of the talismans, instructing the Roman to acquire the knowledge of the golden oak from the spirit who would continue the teaching. After imparting his last request to the young adept he passed on. A funeral pyre was built.

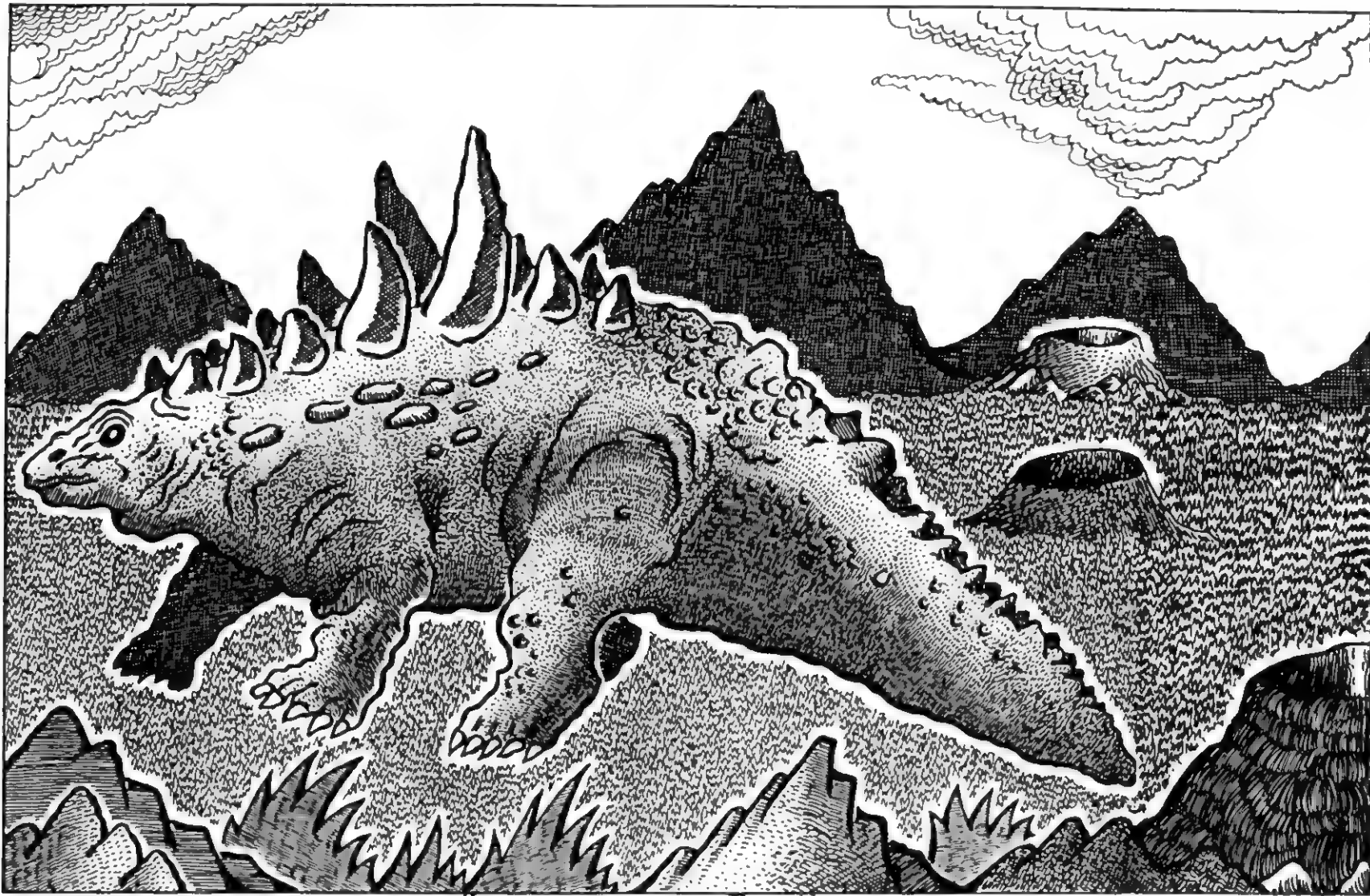
The Roman then started making preparations for the trip back to his homeland. Packing all the treasures the druid had bestowed on him and gathering all the servants, they started on the trek. With the use of the talismans they overcame the hazardous journey. They set up an abode on the edge of Rome in which a shrine was built for the urn of the druid. The Roman, with instruction from the spirit, started the growing of the sacred oak which was to bear golden acorns, from which anything was possible.

Rome was in turmoil, in his absence a new emperor, Caligula, had proclaimed himself a god.

~fin~



The Song Remains the Same...



A posthumously altered piece originally appearing in
Dale Lee Coover's "Dinosaur Folio"

POLACANTHUS FOXI

R. HAYES

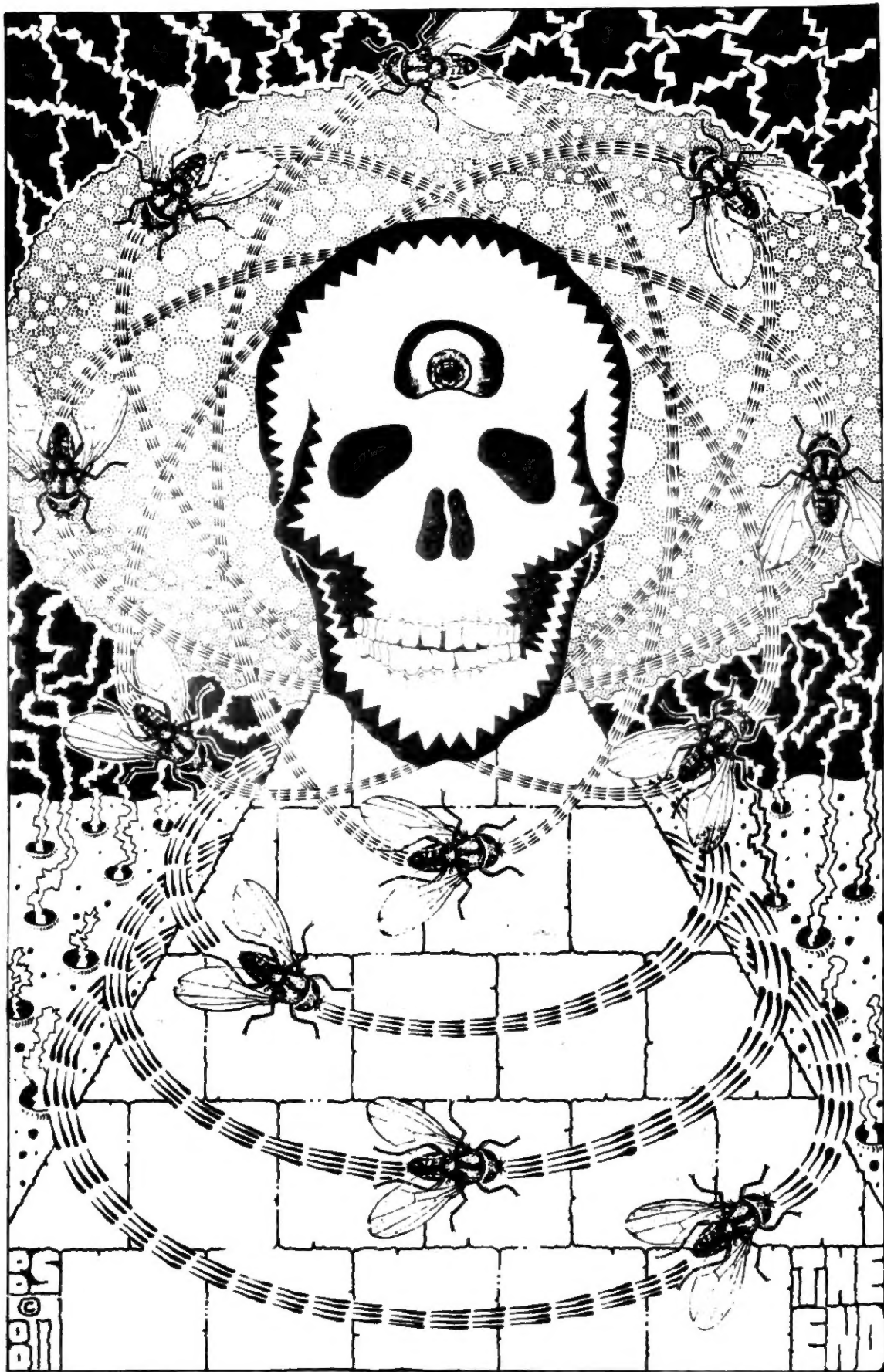
QUEEN'S DREAM

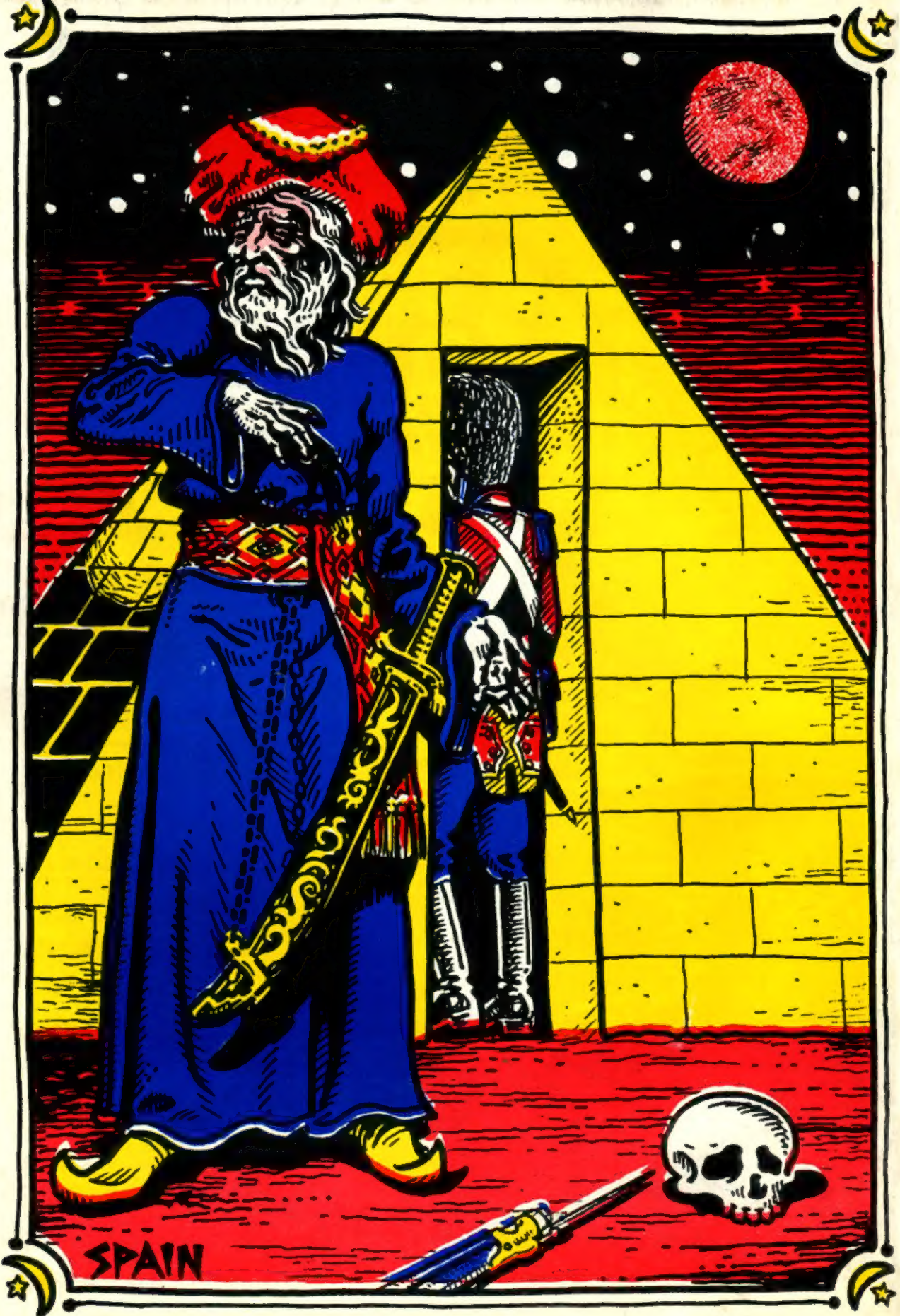
by BILL SHUT











SPAIN